

# Banks Blame Zero Deposit For Cash Crunch



Godwin Emeifele

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It seemed there was going to be a respite after the Apex bank governor, Godwin Emefiele ordered that the commercial banks should start giving out cash to their customers, however, as at press time, customers were still waiting for their money at the banks.

Following the threat by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to go on strike if the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) refused to release cash into circulation, the CBN governor, Godwin Emefiele had directed the commercial banks across the country to dish out both old and new currencies to their customers.

This was done to avert the strike threat and possible grounding of the economy. However, the hardship has continued unabated.

Though it seems getting eased gradually, the system is still tough as people still face hardship in getting cash for daily transactions. The banks do not have enough cash to give out and the Apex bank is not printing new notes, ECHONEWS gathered.

There are long queues at the banks while Automated Teller Machines (ATM) centres across Lagos State are still flooded with crowds pushing one another for a chance to withdraw cash from the machines.

Despite the struggle, cash withdrawal from ATMs has been limited to N10,000 and N30,000 per day; the machines have been set so that a particular ATM card cannot withdraw more than once a day.

Our correspondents who visited ATMs in Isolo, Oshodi, Abule-Egba, and Ikorodu could not withdraw more than N10,000, and none of the ATMs visited was dispensing the new notes. The CBN had said that withdrawal per individual

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Godwin Emefiele

per day from the counter should be pegged at N500,000 but this has not been so.

A tour across major banks in Lagos State by ECHONEWS indicated that people are still struggling for cash despite the directive and announcement by the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) that commercial banks across the country should commence disbursing both old and new naira notes.

An investigation by ECHONEWS revealed that there is little cash in circulation as banks do not have enough cash to satisfy their customers' needs yet.

Some customers who relayed their experiences to ECHONEWS complained that the banks were not putting enough cash in their ATMs hence, many customers could not get the cash daily from the

ATMs.

It was gathered that commercial banks have access to limited cash far below what is needed to ameliorate the lingering crisis occasioned by cash scarcity.

A senior banker told ECHONEWS that it is difficult for banks to give 50 per cent of what their customers need in cash presently, saying more than 85 per cent of the cash withdrawn from circulation has not been returned while new notes are not printed.

The banker who prefers anonymity explained that people no longer deposit their money in the banks and when the banks give out the little in their vaults, the cash crisis still continues.

"There is no way the banks would not run into trouble and there is no way the crisis would be eased, customers are no longer depositing their cash, they only withdraw

and the banks only trade with the little cash in circulation.

"The process is not sustainable, and I don't see anything anybody will do to end the supply crisis until that process changes. If customers withdraw cash only to keep a substantial part of it and nobody returns what has been given out to banks as deposits, how much will CBN print to meet the cash needs of the industry?"

"The banks don't get the cash from Apex bank because a larger percentage of the cash withdrawn from the circulation is not returned while new notes are not printed."

He said many regional or head offices of banks have had to depend solely on CBN in the past two weeks as they have exhausted the residual cash left in their vaults following January/February mop-

up.

Despite the partial relief from ATMs, the Point of Service (POS) operators are still charging their customers high for withdrawing from them. Some still charge N1,500 on N5,000 withdrawn from them while some others charge N1,000, only very few of them now charge N1,000 on any N5,000 withdrawal.

Experts said the cash crisis may not be eased as soon as expected, noting that the Apex bank is insisting on implementing its cashless policy.

The CBN governor had urged Nigerians to brace up for a more aggressive cashless situation, suggesting that the country might not return to the pre-naira redesign cash level.

This seems to be so with the current data. For instance, currency in circulation (CIC) fell from N3.292 trillion at the end of last year to N982

billion at the close of February. That means, the value fell by 70 per cent in two months

However, the banks have not been able to cope with the cashless policy. This has compounded the crisis; online banking such as transfer and USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) code has been frustrating and affecting the economy.

Commenting on the impact of the current situation on the economy, the Chief Executive Officer, Centre for the Promotion of Private Enterprise (CPPE), Dr. Muda Yusuf, said Nigeria's economy cannot be operated without some percentage of cash in circulation, noting that the cash crunch has slowed down economic activities and taken a heavy toll on small businesses.

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# Banks Blame Zero Deposit For Cash Crunch

*Continued from page 2*

According to him, "one had expected that the situation will improve after the elections, but that has not happened. It has continued to slow down economic activities and it is taking a very heavy toll on small businesses, on those in the rural areas, and the agricultural sector."

He noted that these are very huge and strategic constituents of the economy because of their contributions to job creation, economic inclusion, and their contributions to economic diversification.

He observed that the Nigerian economy has lost an estimated N20 trillion to prolonged cash scarcity.

He said the losses arose from the deceleration of economic activities, the crippling of trading activities, the stifling of the informal economy, the contraction in the agricultural sector, and the paralysis of the rural economy, including corresponding job losses in hundreds of thousands.

"So, it is a major issue and we thought that the CBN will relax these things now that the elections have come and gone because it appears the main agenda was not just to ensure that money is not used for the election," he said.

Yusuf said whether that is the way to go is a different matter, but that the cost to the economy and the welfare of the people is enormous and it will drag down the gross domestic product (GDP), leading to the contraction of the economy as well as job losses.

He said the damage is far higher than whatever benefits people might

want to ascribe to it, noting that the CBN cannot arbitrarily cut the amount of cash in the economy.

"It has to be based on clear economic principles and empirical study. You have to relate the amount of cash to the size of your economy as well as the total money supply. Those two variables are very important. That is the way to manage an economy."

Meanwhile, the telecom operators who provide network services and USSD to the banks have claimed that the problem is not from them.

In a chat with ECHONEWS, the Chairman of the Association of Licenced Telecom Operators of Nigeria (ATCON), Mr. Gbenga Adebayo, said the telecom operators have not ceased their services to the banks.

He noted that the failure of services in the banking system is within the banking service and has nothing to do with the network service.

According to him, it is a result of congestion on the websites of commercial banks as many people now transit to online banking.

"Using the USSD code, you experience the same congestion. If you make a transfer, people don't get credited until 24 hours after, and others and that has nothing to do with the USSD code.

"As service providers, we have enough capacity, we have provided for them and the NIMS are open, the NIMS are well running very well and with the current experience people are having we believe is due to congestion on the

websites of the banks.

He emphasised that the ongoing banking challenge is unrelated to the network issue.

"It is nothing to do with the network at all, we have enough capacity, the networks are working and there is no congestion on our side. We believe we have reason to believe that the congestion is from the banks.

"Although the banks are owing us, we are still cooperating with them, we are supporting

financial institutions to mitigate the current problem people are experiencing."

Stakeholders in the banking sector also confirmed congestion on the websites due to the enforcement of the cashless policy.

Since the introduction of the newly redesigned naira note and the withdrawal of the old N1,000, N500, and N200 notes, more people have moved to online banking.

This, according to them,

has made the online banking ecosystem to be more congested, and may not abate sooner as many banks do not have the capacity for the number of customers who now move to online transactions.

Since the cash crisis started, financial technology (Fintech) has come to the aid of many account users.

Apart from expanding financial inclusion, fintech has been helpful in the implementation of the cashless policy.

Meanwhile, experts said the cash crisis may not ease soon as expected, urging the banks and

fintechs to upgrade their online system for people to transact.

The Fintech Development Manager at Mastercard, Tolulope Adeyinka urged the banks to start investing in technology to expand their capacity to be able to cope with the cashless policy when it is fully implemented.

She said the fintech ecosystem will also need to be upgraded while the online payment banks also need to expand their capacities to accommodate the increasing number of customers.



Customers waiting to get cash from an ATM

## Lagos Trains 500 Rural Farmers in Modern Fishing Methods

In line with Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu's T.H.E.M.E.S Agenda of deepening democratic dividends, boosting food production and bringing development to rural communities in Lagos State, a total of 500 rural dwellers have been trained by the Center for Rural Development (CERUD), under the State Ministry of Local Government and Community Matters, in modern fishing methods comprising 250 participants from

the rural divisions of Epe and Badagry.

After the training, 100 beneficiaries with 50 participants each from the two rural divisions were presented with empowerment materials to enable them to take off smoothly.

Mr. Stephen Adeniji, the Director and Chief Executive Officer of CERUD, who disclosed this while presenting the farming tools to the beneficiaries at the premises of the State Agricultural Development Authority, Oko-Oba,

Agege, enjoined the beneficiaries to make good use of the opportunity.

He also advised them to optimise the use of materials given to them to enhance their economic well-being, while also contributing their quota to the present administration agenda to increase agricultural production and enhance food security in Lagos State. Some of the items presented to beneficiaries at the empowerment programme include two large fish holding

plastic tanks, 1000 juvenile fish, fish feeds of various sizes and medications.

The related beneficiaries were full of appreciation for the benevolent gesture of the Lagos State Government, promising to take advantage of the opportunity provided to improve their living standard and contribute to the agricultural development embarked upon by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's administration.





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# Enilolobo allies congratulate Kehinde Joseph, Orelope as they receive Certificate of Return



By Rasaq Adebayo

**E**nilolobo Mandate Ambassadors have congratulated the newly elected Lagos State House of Assembly Member representing Alimosho Constituency 02, Hon. Kehinde Olaide Joseph, and his counterpart in the Alimosho Constituency 01, Hon. Olatunji Luqman Orelope, as they

received their Certificate of Return from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on Thursday, March 30, 2023. The group also congratulated the Lagos State Governor-elect, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, and his Deputy, Dr Obafemi Hamzat. In their congratulatory message to the newly elected officials, the

group said: "It's yet another milestone in the process of consolidation and strengthening the Legislative Arm of our dear State. "All battles are won in prayer. Enilolobo Mandate Ambassadors wish and pray for you all a successful tenure after taking over and returning to the office. "Congratulations to all Lagosians and Alimosho 01 & 02 constituents"

## 38-yr old man arraigned for allegedly defrauding customer N4.8m

By Rasaq Adebayo

**A** 38-year-old man, Idowu Afeez, has been arraigned before the Ogba Magistrate Court sitting in the Ikeja area of Lagos State for allegedly defrauding one Banjo Samuel of the sum of N4.8 million. According to media reports, Afeez allegedly defrauded Samuel under the pretence of purchasing a Toyota Highlander 2013 model from the United States of America on his behalf but converted the money for his own use in Egbeda in the Egbeda-Akwoonjo LCDA of Alimosho LGA.

Obasa on three-count charges bordering on felony to wit, obtaining money by false pretence, and stealing preferred against him by the police. The police prosecutor, Kokoye Olusegun, told the court that the defendant committed the offence in Egbeda. The Magistrate, Mrs S.O Obasa granted the accused bail in the sum of N500,000 with two responsible sureties in like sum who must be blood relations and with verified addresses. The case was then adjourned till May 9 for mention.



(Famuyiwa presenting official car to the council manager of Oke-Odo LCDA)

## Oke-Odo SHS wins N-BA debate competition

By Rasaq Adebayo

**O**ke-Odo Senior High School in the Agbado-Oke-Odo area in a debate competition organised by the Nigeria-Britain Association (N-BA) in honour of Pa Akintola Williams, the Patron of the Association.

The best 11 other secondary schools to emerge as the overall winner.

The school has, over the years, developed a penchant for winning debate and quiz competitions in Lagos, as in 2021, a teacher from the same school emerged overall best in Lagos State Education District 1.

The school's lead debater, Abiodun Adedokun, was named the Overall Best Speaker in the debate.

Sponsored by Scib Nigeria Ltd, Deloitte Nigeria, NEM Insurance, and the British Council, the competition saw students of Corona Schools; Vivian Fowler Memorial School; Ogunmodede Senior College; King Ado Senior High School; Supreme Education Foundation

School; Avi-Cenna International School; Lagos State Model Senior College, Kankon; Alimosho Senior Grammar School; The Childville; Oke-Odo Senior High School; Ikeja Senior High School; and last year's winner, Dansol High School.

The debates, which had four of the schools qualify for the final round from a preliminary round, saw the winning school debate team get laptops for their efforts, while their counterparts were rewarded with Galaxy iPads and Samsung phones for the second and third positions respectively, including other individual prizes

presented to the debaters.

In a statement issued by the N-BA after the event, it noted that the participation of six public schools out of the 12 invited schools, with two of them earning spots in the top three positions, made this year's edition of the debate competition a unique one, adding that it bears testament to the improved quality of education in the nation's public school educational system.

The objectives of the debate competition include investing in education and driving excellence among schools and students, in addition to promoting cultural

engagement among Nigerian and British schools and students.

The Oke-Odo Senior High School, a public school in Alimosho LGA has, over the years, distinguished itself in various competitions.

In 2020, Oke-Odo Senior High School emerged champion in the grand finale of the Year 2020 Lagos State Schools Debate. In other academic-based competitions also, the school has made its mark.

In 2021 also, a teacher of the same school, Miss Adefemi Adeola Adedunke emerged as the Overall Best Teacher in the district.



Chief Akintola Williams sitting with the students of Oke-Odo Senior High School and their Teacher

## Council-Manager receives official car

By Rasaq Adebayo

**T**he atmosphere was joyous when the council manager of Agbado-Oke-Odo LCDA, Mr. OluGbenga Shogbanmu, received a new official car from the council chairman, Hon. David Oladapo, last week.

According to the chairman, the car was to aid his job delivery and motivate his dedication to duty and performance.

While presenting the vehicle, the council boss encouraged him not to rest on his oars but to continue to exhibit a high sense

of responsibility, diligence, and commitment to duty, "which are the qualities and values for which you are receiving this car today."

Receiving the car, the council manager appreciated the chairman for his kind

gesture.

He also lauded him for always prioritising the welfare of workers in the council while assuring him of his continued commitment to the growth and development of the LCDA.



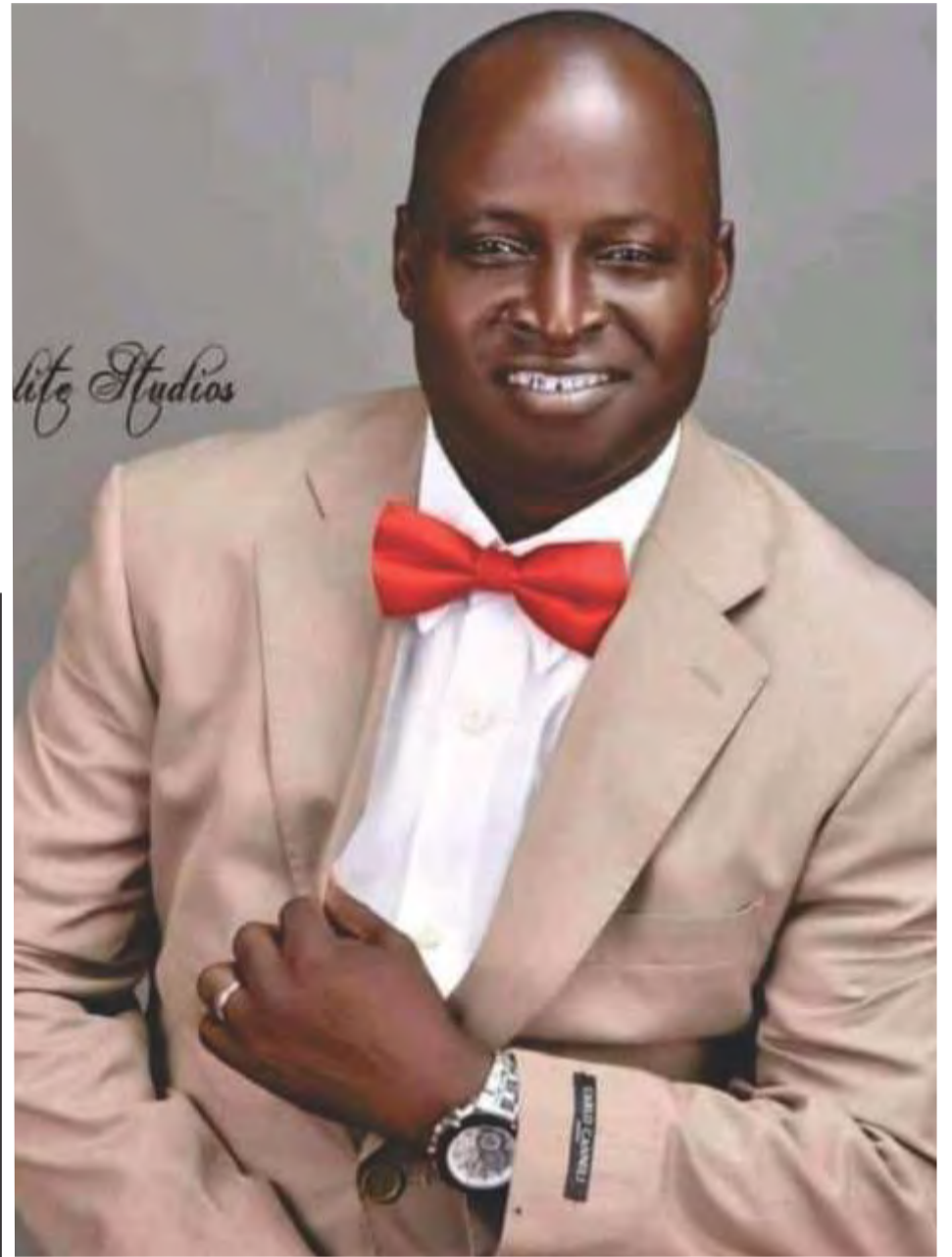
# Market men, women appreciate Abila for bus gift

By Rasaq Adebayo

The market men and women in Iba LCDA have shown appreciation to the council chairman, Hon. Yisa Jubril (Abila), over the utility bus given to them for their mobility. The council boss has procured a bus for the association of market

men and women in the council area as part of contribution to the development of the association. It was said that the bus would also help for the growth of the market and trade activities. Expressing their

Market Master, Deacon Akinosi Oluwatosin, Mrs. Folashade Adedeji Ogidigbo (Iyaloja General, Iba LCDA), and Alhaji Fatai Raheem Akogun (BabaLoja, Iba LCDA), on behalf of the Market Men and Women thanked the council boss for the kind gesture.



Hon. Yisa Jubril (Abila)

According to them, the bus is highly useful and would help them in many ways.

They said it would further make the association stand and function well while useful for

transportation, for their prompt use to aid their swift movement in their various activities.

## You'll not regret electing me to represent you, Ege promises constituents

By Rasaq Adebayo



Hon. Olusegun Ege

The Newly elected Lagos State House of Assembly member representing Ojo constituency I, Comr.

vowed that with the help of Almighty God and support of the masses before the completion of his tenure in office, the

constituents will be proud to have elected him to represent them. He made the promise after receiving his certificate of return from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). He appreciated the people of Ojo his constituency for their unflinching and applaudable support towards his victory at the polls.

"Without Almighty God and the people of my Constituency, I wouldn't have been elected. I appreciate everyone and I pray to God to give me the strength to do beyond expectation," he said.

## Iba council chairman pays unannounced inspection visit to ongoing PHC project

By Rasaq Adebayo

As part of strategy to ensure quality work is done, the chairman of Iba LCDA, Hon. Yisa Jubril (Abila), on Thursday, paid an unannounced inspection visit to the site of the Okokomaiko Primary Health Center at Ago Hausa, Okoko for firsthand inspection. The council boss had recently this year laid the foundation of the Ultra Modern Primary

Health care centre in Okokomaiko Town in fulfillment of a better healthcare scheme for all as promised during his campaign for vote. He was accompanied to the site by the council secretary, Hon. Taiwo Adekambi, the council engineer, Engr. Whesu M.S, and other notable personalities in Iba LCDA. Abila verified the quality of the work in progress at site, saying

encouraging and very hopeful to be completed in the duration as mentioned for the edifice by the contractor. The chairman as reported by his media team expressed satisfaction with the construction work done so far by the contractor as he commended the host community for the cooperation given to the contractor/workers on the site.





# Coker Aguda LCDA begins work on six roads

By Saheed Afolabi



Some of the roads been constructed in Coker Aguda LCDA

**T**he chairman of Coker Aguda LCDA, Hon. Rasaq

Olamilekan has embarked on palliative works on some major roads in

the communities across the council area.

Two roads are to be

rehabilitated in each of the beneficiary communities - Aguda community,

Orile Iganmu community and Coker community.

The chairman said he has approved the work on those roads in preparation for the wet season which normally affects movement during rainy season in the communities.

He said the renovation would enhance free vehicular movement and prevent breakdown of vehicle

incessantly witnessed on the roads.

The elected streets where the palliative works has been done are Oyebode, Solo-Ogun, Funsho Ajayi, Ashiata, Omogiafor, and Hassan Streets

He hinted that some roads that are yet to be constructed and those that had been constructed but failed are in the pipeline and already selected for palliative and repair works.

## LNSC hails Gbajabiamila for training Corps officers

Rv Saheed Afolabi



Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila

**T**he General Manager of the Lagos State Neighbourhood Safety Corps (LNSC), Prince Dr. Ifalade Oyekan has commended the member of the federal House of Representatives representing Surulere constituency, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila for facilitating a training workshop for the Corps members in the constituency.

While speaking at the 4-Day workshop organised for officers of the Surulere command, Oyelakin described Gbajabiamila as a passionate Lagosian who is committed to people's security.

He admonished the officers to ensure they improve on their manners, etiquette and respect for others in the cause of

performing their statutory duties to reflect the new knowledge obtained from the training.

According to him, "this is an opportunity for our officers to complement the efforts of the agency with what they are being taught here. We will always appreciate the challenge to get the better Neighbourhood we have hoped for.

"At LNSC we don't compromise and we don't joke with standards in the security of Lagos State and that's why we always put in our best."

Earlier, Gbajabiamila represented by Mr. Femi Ayinde Marshal, had said that the corps officers were expected to be the eyes and ears of the community for effective and efficient community policing.

He emphasized the

role of the LNSC officers as the first responders to security threats in the community and encouraged them to have confidence in themselves while discharging their statutory responsibilities.

The 4-Day Workshop was organized by the Lower Niger River Basin Authority in conjunction with Monnex Global Resources Limited and facilitated by Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila, Speaker Federal House of Representatives.

The workshop tagged, "Training and Empowerment for Security Officers on Community Security and Intelligence Gathering in Surulere Lagos State" is aimed at ensuring the Officers are well trained and equipped to function maximally and combat threats in their community.

Mr. Nasir Abdulquadri, one of the facilitators at the Workshop elaborated extensively the need for the Officers to be emotionally balanced while carrying out their duties, while reiterating that it is important to be mindful of the effect of uncontrolled anger while relating with those they are meant to protect in the community.

## LG graduates 107 vocational skill trainees

By Saheed Afolabi

**N**o fewer than 107 trainees graduated from the Surulere Local Government Institute of Vocational Education last week.

The students had undergone training in various skills such as catering and food nutrition, hairdressing, make up and cosmetology, fashion and textile making for some weeks.

Speaking at the 21st Graduation Ceremony of the trainees held at Akerele PHC, the council chairman, Hon. Bamidele Yusuf, who was represented by his vice, Hon. Muiz Dosunmu, urged the trained graduates to be more delight and use the skills acquired to the own advantage.

Yusuf said no goal is too hard to accomplish, if they so determine. "No goal is ever too hard to accomplish,

failure is not an option, so keep your mindset on the bigger picture," he advised them.

He proceeded with sharing some pearls of wisdom to the graduating students, this was followed by some motivational and inspired speeches by the Council Manager, Mr. Habeeb Buhari who said hardworking, dedication and wise decision making will help them accomplish their graduation goal.

The chairman, House Committee on Education, Hon. Olubunmi Philips encouraged them to visit Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) Office at the Council Secretariat and present their certificate to acquire loan to start their businesses.

While addressing the gathering, the Head of Education department, Mr. Idowu Banjoko, said the vocational centre is called Institute "because we have skill acquisition to

conform with 21st Century Curriculum Mr Akin Johnson, representing the Director, Agency of Mass Education under the Lagos State Ministry of Education, appreciated council boss for a job well done as he encouraged the graduating students telling them that certificates are recognised by the Federal Government and could be used anywhere in the world.

Prizes were given to the Best graduating students - Mumuni Rasheedat for Hairdressing; Uzoegwu Oluchukwu for Fashion; while Ojemenwa Grace receive prize for Catering. All oeverywtudents were issued graduation certificates.

The students exhibited their products which were patronized by the politicians and members of staff of the Local Government.

# Tosan Blankson reacts to super six qualification

By Saheed Afolabi



Tosan Blankson

**D**elta Queens head coach, Tosan Blankson has reacted to his side on being the first NWFL Premiership team to seal a spot in the prestigious super six. With three NWFL

Premiership match week to go till the end of the season, Delta Queens made history by being the first club to earn a place in the super six after amassing 21 points in nine matches.

Coach Blankson said he knew the club will be at the super six after winning their first four matches this season. The tactician played down any self acclaimed achievement as he

rather gave kudos to the players who made it possible for the team to qualify for the super six and the Delta state government for making it possible with their constant encouragement.

"Right from week four, when we won our first four matches, we knew we are already there for super six.

"With encouragement the State government is giving to the team, we don't have any reason to

disappoint. I don't feel great about this achievement, because the players are the ones too be appreciated. They made it possible.

"Until the super six is won, they (Players) will not relent. Promise they have made.

"The draw Royal Queens got was well deserved. They gave their best, it was as if the match depended to their survival in the league. Congratulations to

them for the first draw they have gotten with Delta Queens in any competitive match."

However, Blankson added that, the unbeaten is not the ultimate prize but winning the super six is the preferred choice.

"Hundred percent unbeaten is not the ultimate. Winning the Super Six is the call to duty. We will take the remaining three matches as a section to achieving our goal, which is the Super 6."

Delta Queens seat top of the NWFL Premiership group A with 21 points from nine matches as they will welcome relegation threatened Osun Babes to the Stephen Keshi stadium, Asaba on the fifth of April.

## Alex Iwobi gives reasons for Eagles below par performance

By Saheed Afolabi

**N**igeria midfielder, Alex Iwobi has given reasons for the poor performance of the Eagles in the AFCON 2024 qualifiers.

Iwobi blamed the state of the Nigeria pitch for the poor performance from the Eagles in a recent loss to Guinea Bissau in the 2024 AFCON qualifier in Abuja.

The Everton midfielder said the Super Eagles players are not always sure of the condition of the pitch that they will play in anytime they honor the national team invitation.

He added that if the Nigeria pitches is of the same standard of the Europeans own, the Nigeria team will defeat any team in the world.

"For example, our



Alex Iwobi

pitch, we don't know if we're going to have a nice pitch when we are playing. Obviously, we've got a new coach now and we played Sierra Leone, but we just about beat them 2-1, a difficult game.

"Then we played Sao Tome and we beat them 10-nil, but we played on a great pitch.

"A lot of us play in Europe now; we play on great pitches where it is easy to just manipulate the ball and play freely.

If we have that in Nigeria, I feel like it will be difficult to beat us; I'm confident enough to say that not many teams can beat us.

"To start with for example, depending on a good pitch, if we have that I feel like we are unstoppable. I mean a pitch with level grass, no crops, just grass."

The Super Eagles are top of the AFCON 2024 qualifying group with nine points from four matches.

## Monday Odigie believes Insurance lost their rhythm against Akwa United

By Saheed Afolabi



Monday Odigie

**B**endel Insurance head coach, Monday Odigie believed they lost their rhythm against Akwa United after settling for a 1-1 draw after a pulsating encounter.

The Benin Arsenal defeated the Promise Keepers 2-0 in the first leg at the Gods will Akpabio stadium, Uyo in the opening game of the NPFL season but couldn't make it a double against Akwa United despite scoring an early goal in the

game.

Speaking to the Press after the game against Akwa United, Bendel Insurance head coach, Odigie said he saw the game the way everybody saw it.

The Edo born tactician has shifted his focus to the next game as he stated that the mistakes will be corrected ahead of the next match.

"The way everybody saw the game is the way I see it. Like I said, the game came the way you all saw it. We didn't get our

rhythm today but it happens sometimes like that but the result is 1-1," he said.

"We just finished a game, we don't have time for preparation. We just try and correct our mistakes and hope that the boys will be like I said, strong enough.

"I don't want to go that way, Nigerians wants football to be good, you need to make the environment like that.

"The games are too clumsy, like I said, we will do the best that we can."

The Promise Keepers ended the Benin Arsenal one hundred percent home record this season as they were forced to a 1-1 draw at the Samuel Ogbemudia stadium, Benin.

Bendel Insurance will face Plateau United in their next game on Sunday, April second at the new Jos stadium, Jos.

The Benin Arsenal maintain their status as the table toppers in the NPFL group A with 25 points from 11 matches.



# Council chairman assures more road construction

By Edith Igbokwe



The chairman of Ifako-Ijaiye Local Government, Prince Usman Hamzat has promised to construct more roads within the council area as he completed

rehabilitation of Awe Street in the Ifako Area of the Local Government. He also assured residents of more developmental initiatives aside from the road construction, saying his administration

would ensure the free flow of traffic and a conducive living atmosphere for all.

According to him, the completion of Awe Street will ease the back-and-forth traffic congestion from Obawole axis through Gospel Crusader Street, Georgius Olatunji Street to Orimolade Street, and towards College Road in Ifako-Ijaiye.

He noted that Awe road rehabilitation will be the 18th road rehabilitated by him since he assumed office in 2021.

He listed the roads rehabilitated so far to include Orimolade Street, Eyiowuawi Street, Bola, Ahmed Tinubu Road; phase 1, Fred Williams Street, Adeshina

Street, Ndike Street, UNA Road, Mustapha Street, Mufutau Shobola Street, and Alhaja Ronke Street.

Other ongoing road construction projects according to him are Aina Ajobo Street, Rafatu Street,

Somefun Street, James Street, Kufeji Street, Idowu Philips, Isaac Aborishade Street, and Akinte Street.

## CDC chairman, Opajobi pledges timely completion of Hall project

By Edith Igbokwe

The chairman of Ifako-Ijaiye Community Development Committee (CDC), Pastor Samuel Opajobi, has expressed the commitment of the committee to the ongoing Hall project, pledging that it would soon be completed.

According to him, the committee has purchased 60 tonnes of sharp sand and 45 tonnes of granite for the third phase of the construction.

Opajobi expressed utmost dedication towards completing the project to give Ifako-Ijaiye CDC a befitting edifice hall.

To achieve huge success, he said the committee inaugurated two sub-committees - the Fund Raising committee and the Building committee to generate funds and build a



Ifako-Ijaiye CDC town hall project

befitting edifice.

He noted that the project has been under construction for some years before the current committee inherited it from its predecessor.

"Since the inception of the current administration, the project has been witnessing a continuous progress despite paucity of funds.

"So far, the executive chairman of Ifako-Ijaiye LGA, Prince Usman Hamzat (UAH) and House of Assembly representative, Hon. Adewale Adedeji (ATA) have committed huge funds to the project and they promised to see the project to completion in no

distant time.

"CDC members are not resting on their oars with the maximum support of the CDC chairman and his executive members the progress of the project continues," he explained.

Opajobi extolled the Fund Raising Committee for its vigorous fund generation and the Building Committee for ensuring a befitting construction despite having meagre resources at their disposal.

Commenting on the project, the Building Committee Chairman, Mr. Fakolujo stated that the committee is ready to take the construction to completion if all the needed materials are provided.

## Council chair charges residents with road maintenance

By Edith Igbokwe

After the rehabilitation of Boko road in Agboyi-kute Local Council Development Area (LCDA), the chairman, Hon. Dele Oshinowo urged the residents to take ownership of the project.

Oshinowo organised a town hall meeting to sensitize residents to take charge of the smooth maintenance of the projects in their communities.

Oshinowo, who spoke through the

councillor representing Owode-Ajeganle Ward, Hon. Adekunle Aderoju, commended community stakeholders for the provision of self-help projects in the community.

He said he called them to an emergency meeting to sensitize and carry the community members along in the maintenance of the road.

The supervisor for works, Hon. Saliu Alabi stated that the administration has pledged to ensure that roads in Owode-

Ajeganle are shortlisted for government interventions, either by the federal or the state government.

He reiterated that the council chairman aims to ensure that roads in the locality are all fixed, saying Owode-Ajeganle was rehabilitated to bring immediate relief to the community members.

The supervisor on community matters, Hon. Seyi Ikuejuyone urged residents to get involved in running the affairs of the Agboyi-kute LCDA as it runs an open-door policy.

## Residents appreciate LAMATA for rescuing community from pollution

By Edith Igbokwe

The residents of Agboyi-kute Local Council Development Area (LCDA) have appreciated the Lagos State Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA) for evacuating a long abandoned waste along the BRT terminal under the bridge.

They expressed their gratitude to LAMATA for responding to their

complaints with prompt action.

They appealed to agencies concerned to ensure that such incident is prevented from reoccurring.

Meanwhile the agency urged residents to imbibe the culture of proper waste disposal to avert an unhealthy environment.

However, the residents declared that the waste was not deposited by

them but removed from the BRT terminal drain and has been left unattended for a long time which led to air pollution in the community.

They claimed that the sight and smell of the refuse became worrisome which prompted them to cry out to LAMATA to come to their aid.

After, LAMATA received the complaints from residents, the agency swung into action and evacuated the waste.



# LG organises 2-week training on Art skills for youths

By Edith Igbokwe



Art craft training for Oshodi youths.

**O**shodi-isolo Local Government in partnership with Elijah Art Academy and Gallery has planned to train young talented artists within the

community in a 2-weeks intensive free art & craft designs training.

The holiday art & craft training is designed to equip students with

commercial skills and mindset needed to thrive in art business and to learn new techniques in discovering their unique styles.

The council

chairman, Otunba Kehinde Oloyede (Kendoo) reiterated his commitment to breeding the next generation of artists in the community.

Interested youths and young artists residing in Oshodi who are ready to explore the training opportunity during the holiday period were urged to visit the UNDP Assisted TVET Institute, Oshodi-Isolo LG for enrollment.

Kendoo said he came in contact with the art work of Mr. Elijah during the last political campaign and

invited him to his office for discussion

He said the outcome of their discussion led to partnership through the UNDP centre for the youths who have passion for painting and artwork to be trained and empowered.

Commenting on the partnership, the CEO of Elijah Art Academy and Gallery, Mr. Ikwuomonu Elijah said the administration of Oloyede has always been in support of the youths since inception.

"I am very happy to be here. I never

expected that the chairman could approach me because I just displayed my paintings and he requested to see me. We have had a fruitful discussion and I'm very happy about it.

"I have heard so many good things about him and I am happy that he eventually gets to me. God will continue to bless him for us. This training partnership for the youths will be diligently carried out to assist my fellow youths in art skills.

"Arts and Crafts Design is a profitable venture that youths can explore," he said.

## Ogundele PHC records first childbirth

By Saheed Afolabi



Lawmaker, Dawodu happy for Mother and child safe delivery.

**F**irst safe childbirth has been recorded at the new Ogundele Ultra Modern Primary Healthcare Center (PHC) facilitated by the Member representing Oshodi-Isolo constituency at the federal House of Representatives, Dr. Bashiru Dawodu.

The baby was delivered in March by Mrs. Abanobi living at 17 Busari Apena Street, Mafoluku Oshodi. The father of the baby, Mr. Abanobi urged pregnant women to make use of the PHC for antenatal and delivery, saying the centre is safe for childbirth.

The family, with much joy, appreciated the lawmaker for always putting the people first in his agenda. The lawmaker facilitated the medical center early last year to reduce the mortality rate in

the community. Dawodu reinstated his commitment to taking the constituency forward in terms of infrastructural development and people-centric projects to improve the constituent's general well-being.

## Expect your reward soon, Bamigboye assures residents for voting APC

By Saheed Afolabi

**F**or voting the Alliance for Progressives Congress (APC) to victory in Mushin LG, the council chairman, Hon. Emmanuel Bamigboye has assured the residents that their rewards would soon come in form of developmental infrastructure.

He said he is confident that his LG will witness new things from both the state and federal government as a reward for delivering the local

council for the APC.

Bamigboye added that having Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu as President will bring more developments to Lagos State and subsequently to his local government area.

"We can see what the State government has achieved in the last eight years of APC at the federal level. We are going to get more especially now that we have Asiwaju as the president, it is a greater opportunity for greater Lagos.

He thanked the people of Mushin and

Lagos in general for coming out en mass to vote for the party candidates and promised to continue to deliver good governance at the grassroots.

Expressing what he expected from the federal government to be led by Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu as President of Nigeria, he said: "My expectation like every other Nigerian is for the federal government to give us stable power supply to drive our economy and provide jobs for our teeming youths so that they don't Japa."

## LG commends Sanwo-Olu over free health care services for community

By Saheed Afolabi

**T**he chairman of Mushin Local Government, Hon. Emmanuel Bamigboye, has commended the Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu for rendering free medical service to the residents of the local council area.

It was gathered the governor has paid for the medical outreach which was carried out by BOSKOH in partnership with

Mushin Local Government within the community and its environs.

The residents were gathered at the Palm Avenue Primary Health Centre, where they received the treatment.

The council boss said the gesture was part of the mission to take free health care services to the grassroots and ensure the people have access to medical attention and medication at this crucial moment.

He enjoined the

people to take good advantage of the programme to know their health status and get free treatments.

The chairman appealed to the people to be calm and continue to pray.

The services offered included free medical consultation, free HIV screening, diabetes and hypertension screening, provision of essential drugs, free cervical screening, free eye

screening with provision of glasses, free breast screening, Covid-19 vaccination, health education, and referral services.

The medical mission team which was led by the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Health, Dr. Oreoluwa Finnih, also had officers from the Lagos State Ministry of Health and Medical team of Mushin Local Government, attending to the patients.

Dr. Finnih in her address expressed

appreciation to the chairman, Hon. Emmanuel Bamigboye for his hospitality and swift response and preparation for the mission despite the short notice.

The BOSKOH Medical mission was to tour round all the Local Government Areas and Local Council Development Areas across Lagos State, to offer free medical services to the people who cannot afford the cost of medical attention due to the current situation in the country.



# Council boss sympathizes with Balogun market traders

By Saheed Afolabi

The chairman of Lagos Island Local Government, Hon. Prince Tijani Olusi has sympathised with shop owners in Balogun Market who lost goods worth millions of Naira to the inferno that razed their shops recently.

The inferno which started around 8 am, was said to have erupted from No. 32 Balogun plaza, where ladies' shoes dealers were based before spreading to other areas.

Olusi appreciated the swift response of the LASEMA boss, Dr. Femi Oke-

Osanyintolu and his team, the United Bank for Africa Firefighters, Lagos State Fire and Rescue Services, Nigeria Police and a couple of other security agencies that were on the ground to douse the raging fire and cordoned off the area for effective rescue operation.



The part of Balogun market that was razed with fire

# Senator-elect, Eshinlokun doles out scholarships to 100 students

By Saheed Afolabi



Wasiu Eshinlokun giving out scholarship to a student

The senator-elect in Lagos Central Senatorial District and the Deputy Speaker of Lagos State House of Assembly, Hon. Wasiu Eshinlokun has doled out scholarship to over hundred students. The beneficiaries are indigenes of Lagos Island who received the forms at a programme held at the Lagos Island LG hall. Speaking at the event, Eshinlokun said the purpose of

the scholarship for the students was to safeguard their future.

"Let me commence this with my heartfelt appreciation to the entire people of Lagos Central for your passionate support and the echo of confidence as reflected in your vote for our dear party, All Progressives Congress (APC) in the just concluded elections. This is not just a renewal of the social contract between the

electorate and the elected, but a show of repositioning of trust in us. Let me restate our commitment that we shall not let you down. Asiwaju shall not let you down. Sanwo-Olu shall not let you down. And, WES shall not let you down, both in my primary duties as a lawmaker and my other developmental duties in which we shall even do more.

"In furtherance of not letting you down, may it be noted that we further our annual steps toward the

fulfillment of our convention to our people in our strive to secure and protect our common future by making education affordable to all the qualified students in our communities.

"Taking from the wisdom in the Chinese proverb that says, 'if you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people'. It is my belief that aiding the affordable education of eligible students in our communities is the best way of safeguarding the futures of our children and procuring sustainable development in our communities. Our journey to procure the license for the good future of our children through mass education started many years ago, and I am dedicated to doing much more because

I understand that education is the enduring life of a society as it disseminates and radiates across generations. From my efforts at the local government on education through the building and rehabilitation of schools and vocational centers; our Free Jamb Form initiative; free school bus services; to this scholarship scheme, amongst others, our aim is to make education not just appealing but also affordable to all our willing children, Let me reiterate, we shall do even more than before.

"This year's scholarship award is the 11th edition of the scheme where students are meritoriously selected by the panel that is comprised of schools' principals and leaders of this committee. The criteria as I was informed included indigency, residency, citizenship, discipline, etcetera. The committee has

thereby dutifully ratified the qualified students for this year's full undergraduate scholarship while some of the students will receive our consolatory prizes. It is my hope and prayer that this set of students will further be found worthy

of the award for subsequent years till they complete their studies as this will signify that they do not fall below the selection standards. This, however, depends on them as further screening will be done to determine

the awardees in the following years. Hence, it is incumbent on this year's winners to continue to be worthy in learning and character, so they can continue to enjoy the benefits of this scholarship. It is my desire and prayer that God enables me to extend the various education schemes not only by the number of awardees but to cover postgraduate studies in Nigeria and abroad."



# AGIL Group CEO congratulates new Lagos lawmakers, Bonu, Ajomale

By Rasaq Adebayo



Hon. Solomon Bonu

Hon. Ladi Ajomale

**T**he Chief Executive Officer of a leading travel agency company, AGIL Group, Mr. Ayo Gbeleyi has congratulated newly elected

representatives of Badagry constituency 1 and Oshodi-Isolo constituency 2 at the Lagos State House of Assembly, Solomon Bonu and Ladi Ajomale for

completing the process by picking up the INEC certificates of return on Thursday.

In a statement sent to ECHONEWS, Gbeleyi said the election of Bonu and Ajomale

shows the level of trust the people have in the politicians.

He challenged them to ensure that they do not betray the trust people have in them throughout their stay in office.

Bonu and Ajomale on Thursday joined the remaining 48 members of the assembly to receive their certificate of return from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The AGIL Group CEO stated that the victory of Mr. Bonu did not come as a surprise to him as it was obvious the love the people of Badagry have for him, "Honorable Bonu is a hard working professional who has the interest of the people of Badagry at heart."

Bonu, a former Special Adviser to Governor Sanwo-Olu on Tourism, Arts and Culture, polled a total of 18,776 votes to beat his closest opponent, Gbenga Fayemi of the Peoples Democratic Party

(PDP) who got 3,233 votes.

Gbeleyi said: "He represented Badagry well while he was Special Adviser to Governor Sanwo-Olu and he never discriminate against any region.

"It was obvious he would win. His performance as S.A. on Tourism, Arts and Culture earned him many awards and accolades, one of which came from our company, AGIL Group. His vision for Badagry is clear and members of his constituency should relax and cooperate with him to deliver his manifesto."

Gbeleyi also assured that the good work Bonu started as Special Adviser to Sanwo-Olu to turn Lagos into a megacity would be completed in good time.

In the same vein, the AGIL CEO congratulated the newly elected representative of Oshodi-Isolo constituency 2 at the Lagos State House of

Assembly, Ladi Ajomale for emerging victorious at the just concluded elections.

Ajomale polled 19,481 votes to defeat Obanufin Shehu Samuel of LP who polled 17,644 votes.

Speaking on the Victory of Ajomale, Gbeleyi stated, "the people of Oshodi-Isolo 2 made the right choice with their votes, Ajomale will perform exceptionally well and deliver the dividends of democracy in the constituency."

According to him, the track record of the former Special Assistant to a Lagos Deputy Governor in various capacities he has served is an attestation to what the people should expect in terms of governance.

"We are happy about the election results. We waited for this moment and it has come to fruition. We thank the people of Badagry, Oshodi-Isolo and Lagos. Congratulations to these two great and visionary leaders with the people at heart," Gbeleyi added.

## Free JAMB beneficiaries applaud council boss, Mrs. Muhammed

By Edith Igbokwe



(Mrs Funmilayo Mohammed)

**B**eneficiaries of Apapa Iganmu Local Council Development Area (LCDA) free JAMB forms have appreciated a month free tutorial classes opportunity provided by the council chairman, Mrs. Funmilayo Muhammed in preparation for their Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). They expressed happiness to have

obtained a rare opportunity of free form and knowledge impartation to achieve their academic dreams.

The five weeks of free intensive classes on major subjects for the JAMB examination are slated to end on April 27, 2023.

Beneficiaries gathered every Monday to Friday from the hours of 3 pm to 6 pm for classes at Orile Primary School along Badagry Expressway.

According to Mrs. Muhammed, the

administration is ready to groom beneficiaries to achieve their results.

She urged them to abide by the rules and regulations guiding the tutorial classes.

According to her, the free tutorial is also open to other applicants who had applied for the examination in the council area.

A statement issued by the council chairman's media office confirmed the development, noting that it was one of the deliberate ways the council boss intended to help the admission seekers to come out with flying colours in the examination.

One of the applicants, Samuel Agunbiade commended the council boss for the gesture as he explained that enrolling for the tutorial class would have caused him nothing less than seven thousand.

He promised to make the most of the free lesson and make the council honcho proud.

It was gathered that only a few council areas out of the 57 LGAs and LCDAs in the state bought and gave out free JAMB forms to indigent students.

## Lady dragged to court for assaulting landlord in Isheri

By Rasaq Adebayo

**A** 30-year-old lady, Miss Deborah Uzowara, has been dragged to court for allegedly assaulting her landlord, Bamidele Bashiru.

It was gathered that the accused tore her landlord's clothes and left him naked in public.

The incident was reported to have taken place at Michael Ojo Street, Isheri-Oshun, in the Igando-Ikotun LCDA of Alimosho LGA, where they reside.

According to their neighbours, Deborah, who is still single, had a disagreement with

Bashiru over an undisclosed matter, and that led to an exchange of hot words. In the process, Deborah reportedly assaulted and tore his clothes and left him naked.

The alleged assault was reported to the police at Isheri-Oshun Division, and she was arrested and detained at the station for interrogation over her conduct.

After thorough interrogation, the police found her culpable and later charged her before the Ejigbo Magistrates Court for the alleged offence, to which she pleaded not guilty

when she was arraigned.

The prosecutor, Mr. Oje Uagbale, did not object to her bail but asked the court to give a date for a hearing, to enable the police to prove that she committed the alleged offence.

The Presiding Magistrate, Mrs. O.A. Akokhia, granted her bail in the sum of N100,000 with two sureties in like sum, who must show evidence of means of livelihood.

The matter was adjourned while the defendant was remanded in custody at the Correctional Centre at Kirikiri town, Lagos, pending when she would perfect her bail conditions.



Stories By Kunle Awosiyan

# LASCOPA Seals Chiffy Supermarket Over Sales of Expired Products

The Lagos State Consumer Protection Agency (LASCOPA) today sealed Chiffy Supermarket, located at 3, Oduduwa Crescent GRA, Ikeja, for selling expired toothpaste and other household products.

The General Manager of LASCOPA, Afolabi Solebo Esq. had earlier on Sunday responded and acted swiftly by visiting the supermarket following a tip-off from a Consumer's Facebook post alerting the Agency and the general public on the sales of the expired products at Chiffy Supermarket in GRA Ikeja.

Upon arrival at the supermarket, Solebo disclosed that the toothpaste and other products found in the store had no price tags and were all expired. He added that some of the products displayed for sale at the supermarket were discovered to have expired several months ago while being sold to unsuspecting consumers.

He said, in line with the T.H.E.M.E.S Agenda of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, such acts would not be tolerated in Lagos State, stressing that the matter is already before a court of competent jurisdiction for prosecution.

Solebo, who reiterated LASCOPA's mandate of protecting the interest of consumers against expired, hazardous and substandard products, said that the supermarket would remain shut and placed under surveillance, while samples of the products confiscated would be destroyed by the relevant

Government Agency.

The General Manager averred that the action became necessary to rid the State of all forms of unscrupulous and unfair trade practices and to further ensure the safety of consumers from the dangers of expired

products which may lead to sickness or even death for innocent residents. He further stressed that the era of cheating and short-changing consumers by unscrupulous businessmen and women in Lagos is over.

Solebo, therefore, urged members of the public to always speak out if they find such acts that negate consumers' safety or visit the Agency's Head office located at 2b, Soji Adepegba Close, Off Allen Avenue, Ikeja, or any of its Annex offices

at Badagry Local Government Secretariat, Bariga LCDA Secretariat, Ikoyi-Obalende LCDA Secretariat and Ikorodu Local Government Secretariat.

He also implored concerned members of the public to call

08092509777, 08124993895, 09064323154 or send Emails to lascopa@lagosstate.gov.ng or lascopa@gmail.com to report any individual or company that infringes on their rights.



The Randle General Hospital (RGH), Surulere, has joined its counterparts across the globe to commemorate the Y2023 World Tuberculosis Day with an awareness programme for patients and residents with the theme: "Yes! We Can End TB!" held at the General Outpatient Department of the Hospital.

The Medical Director/CEO of RGH, Dr. Olumide Sojinrin, in his address at the event, explained that World Tuberculosis Day is commemorated annually on March 24 March to raise public awareness about the

## Randle General Hospital Celebrates Year 2023 World Tuberculosis Day

devastating health, social and economic consequences of tuberculosis, as well as the need to step up efforts to end the global tuberculosis epidemic. He also averred that the theme of World Tuberculosis Day 2023 is aimed at inspiring hope and encouraging high-level leadership, increased investments, faster uptake of new World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations, adoption of innovations, accelerated action and

multisectoral collaboration to combat the tuberculosis epidemic. The awareness campaign was also

extended to Ideal Girls High School on Randle Avenue where the team of nurses from RGH enlightened students and staff of

the school on the causes, mode of transmission, signs, symptoms, treatment and prevention of Tuberculosis.





Stories By Kunle Awosiyun

# Domestic, Sexual Violence Agency Urges 300 Parents On Child Safeguarding

The Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) has reiterated the commitment of the Babajide Sanwo-Olu Administration to continue to engage parents on the need to safeguard their children from all forms of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. The Executive Secretary of DSVA, Mrs. Titilola Vivour-Adeniyi, disclosed this at a one-day interactive programme on Safeguarding and Child Protection organised for 300 parents from Lagos Education District III held recently at the Dolphin Senior High School, Lagos Island. Vivour-Adeniyi, who spoke through the Agency's Head of the Clinical Psychology Department, Olive Oluwagbemileke, said the purpose of the forum was to enlighten parents on Child Abuse, prepare them on signs to look out for, and steps to take in reporting cases as part of measures to find a lasting solution to domestic and sexual violence in the State. While stressing that the programme was organised in partnership with the Ministry of Education to reduce the growing trend of rape culture in primary and

secondary schools across the State, Vivour-Adeniyi said the agency must also empower the parents with relevant skill-set and information to boost their parenting skills to prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence cases proactively. Also Speaking, the representative of the Office of Education Quality Assurance, Mr. Kamaldeen Akodu, said parents must devote adequate time to their children and wards. In his words, "We have had cases where parents neglect their children and these children have been abused by neighbours, uncles and others and at the end of the day they blame the Schools for the incidents". One of the facilitators and State Coordinator of Child Protection Network, Ronke Oyelakin said the participants were equipped to safeguard their children and to address the issue of violence that children are faced with. Oyelakin stressed that all stakeholders have a collective responsibility to instill good values in children towards a healthier society. Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Tumblr Pinterest Reddit VKontakte Share via Email Print



## LASBCA Identifies, Publishes List of 349 Distressed Buildings In Lagos

In furtherance to the Lagos State Government's commitment to curbing the menace of building collapse, the Lagos State Building Control Agency has identified and published the list of 349 buildings found to be exhibiting various signs of distress across the State. According to the General Manager of the Agency, Arc. Gbolahan Owodunni Oki, the suspected distressed structures were identified through a thorough monitoring exercise aimed at preventing collapse and its attendant effects such as loss of lives and properties. He added that all the identified structures have signs which indicate that they might not be fit for human habitation, some of those signs include cracks, spalling, bulging, exposed reinforcement, sinking and tilting, hence the need to conduct Non-Destructive Test (NDT) on them to ascertain their structural stability. He noted that though

statutory notices were duly served on the owners/developers to carry out the much-needed NDT, the Agency is yet to receive responses from the owners or developers of the structures. Speaking further, Arc. Oki said that the publication is therefore a final notice given to the affected building owners to conduct the NDT and carry out the recommendations of the Test which may include re-engineering/renovation or removal as the case may be.

He maintained that in the case of removal, a Demolition Permit should be obtained from the Lagos State Physical Planning Permit Authority before removal while Renovation Permit should be obtained from the same Agency (LASPPPA) in the case of re-engineering or renovation. Oki said that a timeframe of 90 days is given after the publication for all owners/developers to do the needful failing which LASBCA will remove the structures in the interest of public safety and in line with the regulatory

provisions of the Law, adding that in the event that LASBCA removes the structures, cost of demolition will be borne by the owner/developer of the structures. He also urged all owners/developers to carry out detailed maintenance checks on their properties and obtain the Certificate of Completion and Fitness for Habitation for new and existing buildings that are yet to do so in line with the building codes of the State.



Some of the buildings



Stories By Kunle Awosiyan

# Lagos Traffic Radio Wants Greater Commitment From Staff

The General Manager of Lagos Traffic Radio (LTR) 96.1fm, Mr. Tayo Akanle has charged the staff to remain steadfast and committed to the realisation of the mandate of the Radio Station. Speaking at the quarterly staff forum of the agency, Akanle informed that it is only through commitment that the station can maintain the standard it has set for itself. Akanle urged the workforce to continue to promote inter-departmental cordiality as it is the key through which teamwork and productivity can be promoted. He stated further that all members of staff should distance themselves from peddling unconfirmed news stories and

misinformation that can truncate the peace of the state because they are regarded as ambassadors of a media organisation. While thanking everyone for their dedication and doggedness through the period of fuel scarcity and naira crunch, he stated that the welfare of the workforce is his topmost priority. He declared that the agency has completed plans to effect salary increments as announced by Mr. Governor and will also pay arrears from January across the board. The high point of the meeting was the emergence of Mr. Taiwo Oshinowo, Tunde Adeniji and Oyinlola Olayinka as Staff of the Month Awardees for January, February and March respectively.



Group picture of Traffic Radio Staff

## Lagos Bus-Train Accident Victims Compensation Committee Submits Report

A nine-member committee set up by the Lagos State Government in the aftermath of the Bus-Train collision of Thursday, 9th March 2023, has submitted its report. Findings of the report showed that the accident had six fatalities from a total of 102 passengers involved, with 85 passengers on board the Staff Bus, while 17 were on the train. The Committee as part of its recommendations advised: Death benefits from the Group Life Insurance for families of the

deceased, provision of employment to one employable child of the deceased and a concessionary scholarship to one of the deceased's biological children. Injured accident victims were also recommended in the report to be paid full insurance claims as compensation while any staff victim with a permanent disability is also to be compensated in line with the Group Life Insurance Policy of the State, among other benefits. The committee, which consists of Permanent Secretaries from

relevant Ministries of the State Public Service, was set up to identify the families of the deceased and their dependents, as well as the injured officers, and to determine appropriate compensation packages for each affected family and staff of the State Government. A final decision on the committee's recommendations will be taken by the State Executive Council and further directives communicated by the Head of Service, Mr. Hakeem Muri-Okunola.

## Lagos Government Seeks Collaboration With Institute of Surveyors

Lagos State Government has called for collaboration with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors London (Nigeria Group) in line with the Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu Administration's commitment to making Lagos better for all residents in the State. The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Waterfront Infrastructure Development, Esv. (Mrs.) Olayinka Patunola-Ajayi, Mni, made the call when she received the executive members of the Institution led by the Vice Chairman, Esv. Tayo Odunsi in her office on Tuesday. According to her, the Institution is full of core professionals in the

environmental field like Estate Surveyors, Land Surveyors, Engineers and Architects who are relevant to infrastructural development in the State. While urging the body not to hesitate to bring forth ideas and innovations that can enhance the T.H.E.M.E.S Development Agenda of the State Government, Patunola-Ajayi revealed that the Ministry has continued to give the provision of waterfront infrastructure a priority with the construction of more jetties and channelisation of water routes to boost water transportation system in Lagos. She reiterated that, despite the numerous giant strides of the Sanwo-Olu

Administration across all sectors, the State Government is not resting on its oars and still working assiduously for the growth of the State. According to her, the long-term target of the present administration is to situate Lagos in the company of global cities with 21st-century attributes. Earlier in his address, the Vice-Chairman of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors of London (Nigeria Group), Esv. Tayo Odunsi said, apart from coming to felicitate her on the new appointment, the Institute is ready to render all necessary support towards ensuring that all set goals and objectives of the Ministry are achieved.



Story By Kunle Awosiyan

# Sanwo-Olu's Policies Are To Stimulate Business In Lagos-Commissioner

The Lagos State Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives has stated that the policies, programmes and projects of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu Administration are aimed at providing a conducive environment and stimulating business growth in the State.

The Commissioner, Dr. (Mrs.) Lola Akande made this known at the opening ceremony of Ikorodu Division Expo organised by Ikorodu Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the Lagos State University of Science and Technology, LASUSTECH, held at the Institution's campus on Monday with the theme; "MSME: Key to an Inclusive and Sustainable Recovery for Economic Development".

Speaking at the event, Akande, represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Adetutu Ososanya, FCA, asserted that the administration of Mr. Governor, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu has been intentional about implementing programmes and projects meant to support businesses in the State.

Her words: "Recently, very ambitious projects initiated, facilitated or supported by the

State Government were commissioned. These include the Lekki Deep Sea Port in Ibeju Lekki; Lagos Rice Mill in Imota, here in Ikorodu; 18.75km Eleko-Epe six-lane rigid pavement expressway; the first phase of the 13 kilometres Lagos Blue Light Rail and others. Without doubt, these projects are already impacting labour and many enterprises positively in different parts of the State. Ultimately, MSMEs will form the greater percentage of beneficiaries as they work towards sustainable recovery for economic development".

Describing e-commerce as an enabler for business resilience and

recovery, she declared that the successful completion of the first phase of the Lagos Smart City/Fibre Duct Infrastructure Project will drive business activities, particularly of MSMEs whose operations depend on fast internet access.

"The implementation of the project, which has recognised e-commerce as the new goldmine, will promote the penetration of digital technology in our economy and enable businesses to latch on to the numerous benefits of online platforms such as social media, global e-commerce platforms and websites to facilitate MSMEs access to wider markets, leading to increased

patronage, production, employment generation and faster economic recovery. Thus, MSMEs higher digital maturity will reflect positively on the income of small business owners", she said.

The Keynote Speaker and Lagos State Chairman, Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME), Dr. Adams Adebayo emphasised the need to support MSMEs as they are the backbone of every economy.

"The challenges confronting the MSMEs varied and include access to low-interest loans, inadequate infrastructure, subsistence and manual production,

mindset and lack of innovative ideas. Relevant institutions must create access to low-interest funds for entrepreneurs to access while there is a need for MSMEs to scale up their production to meet local and export needs. I also want to advise the Government to create a three-year pre-retirement entrepreneurship/investment window to transform public servants into entrepreneurs", he stated.

The President, Ikorodu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Chief Kayode Shoderu expressed his delight in the organisation of the Expo, which he described as part of the commitment to

building sustainable MSMEs, as the Fair provides the platform to showcase products and services while exploring opportunities for growth and innovation.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Vice-Chancellor, Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH), Professor Olumuyiwa Odusanya averred that the Expo is an opportunity to grow the economy of Ikorodu Division.

"The focus on the MSME sector can transform even the nation's economy and lift people out of poverty. It is a time to market, sell and exchange goods and services", he said.





Stories Kunle Awosiyani

# Lagos Says Ban On Okada Is Still In Force

The Lagos State Government has reiterated that the ban on commercial motorcycles popularly called 'Okada' in 10 Local Government Areas (LGAs) and 15 Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs) across the State is still in force.

Special Adviser to the Governor on Transportation, Hon. Sola Giwa declared disclosed this at weekend while on a tour of some restricted areas within the State, where large numbers of motorcyclists (okada riders) had resumed operations.

He reaffirmed the State Government's ban on okada in the Local Government Areas which include Kosofe, Oshodi-Isolo, Somolu, Mushin, Apapa, Ikeja, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Surulere and Eti-Osa, as well as the Local Council Development Areas under them including Ojodu, Onigbongbo, Lagos Island East, Yaba and Coker-Aguda.

Others, according to him are Itire-Ikate, Eti-Osa West, Iru Victoria Island, Ikoyi-Obalende, Ikosi-Isheri, Agboyi-Ketu, Isolo, Ejigbo, Bariga and Odi-Olowo.

While urging both riders and passengers to desist from contravening the ban, the Special Adviser implored the general public to comply as both the riders and passengers are liable to three years in prison if apprehended and prosecuted. He added that motorcycles impounded will be crushed in line with the provision of Section 46, sub-section 1, 2 & 3 of the Transport Sector Reform Law (TSRL), 2018.

Giwa, therefore solicited the support of residents towards ensuring full compliance with all government policies, noting that despite the available existing interventions and viable alternatives provided for

okada operators which were expected to cushion the effect of the ban on their livelihood, the recalcitrant riders have refused to take advantage of them.

He revealed that some of the viable alternatives have been made available for the operators by the State Government through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA), Ministry of Wealth Creations and Employment, Office of Civic Engagement, Office of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), Lagos Economic Acceleration Programme (LEAP) and the Ministry of Agriculture (Agric YES) among others.

He also said the State Government's First and Last Mile Bus Transport Scheme, the BRT Scheme, the Lagos e-hailing taxi Scheme (LAGRIDE) and other sustainable modes of transportation were also part of interventions provided to minimise the inconveniences of the motoring public in executing their daily activities.

Giwa averred that the position of the state government on okada is very clear, stressing that there is no going back in order to consolidate on the achievements made so far in the decrease in the accident and crime rates as well as the return of sanity to the communities within the State.

The Special Adviser averred that the Security Agencies who have been partnering with the State Government, including the Nigeria Police Force, the Army, Navy and Air force, are still prepared to sustain enforcement on all the banned corridors, this is in addition to the operations of the State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) and the Anti-Okada Squad.



Men of the Nigeria Police with seized motorcycles

## Lagos Govt Vows To Clampdown on Miscreants Harassing Motorists in Lagos

The Lagos State Government has vowed to continue to clampdown on miscreants who harass motorists and truck drivers going about their lawful businesses, through continuous sting operations across the State.

The Commissioner for Transportation, Dr. Frederic Oladeinde made this known at the weekend while parading four arrested hoodlums – Tunji Oyedeji, Allison Ozin, Taiwo Olubodun and Awotunde Ahmed, who were caught perpetrating illegal activities in Amuwo-Odofin area of the State. Oladeinde stated that the arrest of the miscreants demonstrates the State Government's resolve to provide an enabling environment devoid of illegal activities,

stressing that the Ministry will intensify its sting operations across the State with a view to curbing the activities of the urchins whose actions are hindering the State's economic development.

He noted that the suspects arrested have been handed over to the Lagos State TASKFORCE for investigation and prosecution, warning others to desist from illegal activities or be made to face the full wrath of the law in line with the Lagos State Transport Sector Reform Law 2018.

Recall that the Transport Operations and Compliance Unit of the Ministry in February apprehended a group of miscreants in the Igando axis while extorting a tipper driver on his way to offload his consignment.



Arrested Miscreants



By Kunle Awosiyan

# Lagos Govt Partners ENL-NOVAL Ltd on EPPPS For Land Administration



Ministry of physical planning at the contract signing ceremony

Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development on Thursday signed a contract with ENL-NOVA Ltd for the use of the Electronic Physical Planning Processing System (EPPPS) to bring about positive change for land administration in the State.

The Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development in its bid to embrace a One-Stop solution, which will consist of Business Processes for all the Physical Planning Technical departments and units as well as its agencies, engaged ENL-NOVA Ltd to design, develop and deploy a sustainable One-Stop process through the EPPPS towards achieving holistic full

automation of physical planning processes in tandem with THEMES agenda of the Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu administration in Lagos State.

The contract between the Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development, and ENL-NOVA Ltd was signed by the Special Adviser to Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu on e-GIS and Planning Matters, Dr. Olajide Babatunde; Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development, Engr. Oluwole Sotire and Deputy CEO of ENL-NOVA Ltd, Mr. Peter Afam.

Speaking during the Contract Signing Ceremony held at Alausa in Lagos, Dr. Babatunde said the EPPPS will bring

about a sustainable One-Stop process for enhanced service delivery to Lagos residents and bring a change to the face of land administration in the State.

He said the EPPPS is a new initiative that would ensure full automation of the construction planning process in Lagos State, adding that it will also enhance e-service delivery, online submissions of applications, e-screening, e-assessment, e-payment, e-site inspection, e-planning, complaint mechanism, accountability and transparency of Physical Planning permits and processes.

Babatunde disclosed that about 500 computers would be provided to advance the project with a lot

of benefits which include robust online submission of applications for e-screening, assessment, payment, planning, and site inspection, enhance Ease of Doing Business in the State as well as effective and efficient web-based service delivery.

He said: "I feel particularly happy today because, with this project, it means that seamlessly with minimum human interaction, you can get building approval from Lagos State. You can input your drawings into a system and the system can approve them within 10 minutes. That is a major landmark. It would be first for Lagos again among all the 36 states and the FCT."

Also speaking, the Chairman of ENL-

NOVA Ltd, Mr. Mike Chukwu, thanked God and commended Governor Sanwo-Olu for making the project a reality. He appealed for the cooperation of all the stakeholders and the public toward the success of the project.

Chukwu pledged to deliver on the project to meet the aspirations and yearnings of Lagosians for enhanced delivery, promising that his company would not fail the Lagos State Government and the residents of the State who were looking forward to an enhanced service

"We are very excited. This is a project that has been in the work for a very long time. It promises a lot for the people of Lagos State. We are hoping to reform the system of physical planning and upgrade it so that

it will be properly integrated across all the facets of its good planning and most importantly, it will also help and enhance revenue collection for Lagos State Government and block leakages," he said.

Speaking earlier, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development, Engr. Oluwole Sotire described the project as one of the pillars of the THEMES developmental agenda of Governor Sanwo-Olu's aim at leveraging technology.

"This is the beginning of a new journey for us and we are all excited. We believe that in the next few months, we will begin to see the effects of the Contract Signing Ceremony," he said.



By Kunle Awosiyan

# Lagos Commissioner For Finance Emerges Winner of Forty Under 40 Africa Awards

The Lagos State Commissioner for Finance, Dr. Rabiul Olowo, has emerged winner of the Forty under 40 African Awards in recognition of his outstanding performance in Governance and for his contribution to revenue generation, debt management and astute management of the fifth largest economy in Africa. The award ceremony, organised by The Black White Hover Law Practice was held on Saturday, 25th March 2023, in South Africa and attracted 126 nominees and delegates from 23 countries across the continent. The award aims at celebrating African most influential and accomplished young business leaders under the age of 40 from a wide range of industries, who are committed to business growth, professional excellence, and community service.

Under the leadership of Dr. Rabiul Olowo as the Commissioner for Finance, Lagos State attained an unprecedented international triple-A rating by Fitch, an International Ratings Agency. This rating is a reflection and testimonial of improved accountability, transparency and integrity, especially in the management of public funds in Lagos State. Olowo has over the years demonstrated his commitment to making Lagos State the best city to live, work and do business by providing strategic collaboration through the arrangement of the financial and technical success of West Africa's first metro line – Lagos Blue Line – which will

move hundreds of thousands of people across the state daily. He championed the Ministry towards increasing the State's Internally Generated Revenue by double digits, evidenced by a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of about 12 per

cent and also worked with the State Ministry of Agriculture to deliver the biggest Rice Mill in Africa, Imota Rice Mill.

Other major achievements of Dr. Olowo include Raising N150B syndicated loan at a competitive rate of 14% in his first three months in

office as a timely intervention to finance gaps in the State's infrastructure, raising N100B Series III Bond at 12.25% – largest bond issuance ever embarked upon by any Sub-National entity in the Country, a review of Land Use Charge with the

enactment and implementation of a new law towards delivering a more liberal tax regime to promote voluntary compliance.

Dr. Olowo, who was also recently named the 2022 Public Finance Administrator of the Year at the Leadership

Excellence Awards, has contributed immensely to public policy development and implementation, impacting several pillars of the T.H.E.M.E.S developmental agenda of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's Administration.



Dr. Rabiul Olowo

## Lagos Govt Grants Access To Chrisland Terminal Classes

The Lagos State Ministry of Education has granted permission for students in terminal classes to access Chrisland High School, Opebi, for physical learning ahead of their examinations due to begin soon. Commissioner for Education, Mrs. Folasade Adefisayo broke the news in an update on the case of the deceased student of the school, Miss. Whitney Adeniran.

According to Mrs. Adefisayo, "The school will remain closed until



Mrs. Folasade Adefisayo

all necessary judicial processes superintended over by the State's Ministry of

Justice and other ongoing administrative inquests within the purview of the Office of

Education Quality Assurance and other agencies are completed".

She also hinted that arrangements are ongoing for other categories of students to return to school, adding that "The temporary permission to allow the terminal classes comprising JSS3 and SS3 students access to the school was granted to enable them to participate in their terminal examinations".

"The Ministry, with the support of the Lagos State Joint Task Force in charge of the implementation of the child protection policy and safeguarding,



# APC Victory In Lagos: What Changed Between Feb 25 And March 18

**A**fter Lagos All Progressives Congress, APC had finished licking its wound following its defeat by the Labour Party in the presidential election, the party quickly went back to the drawing board to re-strategise for the governorship poll. Like a wounded lion, the party came out bolder to defeat its closest rivals by a landslide margin of over 400, 000 votes in an election that defied fuel and Naira notes scarcity.

The APC candidate and the incumbent governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu polled 762, 134 votes to beat the Labour Party candidate Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour who polled over 300,000 and Jide Adediran of the Peoples Democratic Party, who polled over 62,000.

The victory was sweet and it looked as if it came naturally, it was a result of hardwork, change of attitude and winning formula by the party chieftains and their grassroots supporters.

It was also a consequence of rigorous and deeper campaign into the nooks and crannies of the state, including the riverine communities.

The victory came due to alliances between APC candidate and a few candidates of other political parties who would not buy into idea of ethnicity being peddled by Labour Party.

It was also made possible because aggrieved members sheathed their swords



and embraced peace, following the intervention of party leaders.

Between February 25 when Labour Party polled over 582,000 to beat APC that polled over 572,000 and March 18 when APC recorded a landslide victory, a lot of groundworks were done by the ruling party.

First, the party revamped its house-to-house campaign strategy to rejig voters and to also appeal to many of its aggrieved members who had earlier lost interest in the polls due to scarcity of fuel and Naira notes. The Central Bank of Nigeria's Naira redesign policy and the subsequent scarcity of the currency notes, no doubt, adversely

affected the 2023 general elections.

In its campaign, all the chairmen of Local Government and Local Council Development Areas of Lagos were mobilised for the House-To-House campaign; to talk to voters and disabuse their views on ethnic and religious sentiments that the Labour Party had used to get votes in the presidential polls.

The house-to-house campaign was an idea that worked because most of Lagos residents who spoke to our correspondent a week after the presidential election said that their choice of governor would be based on past performance, experience and competence.



Gov Sanwo-Olu during campaigns in Lagos

To further demystify the ethnic sentiment, Sanwo-Olu moved into the various Igbo dominated markets in the metropolis to sell his agenda and to reset the minds of the traders against ethnic campaigns.

He entered churches,

mosques and had numerous meetings with religious and community leaders on why APC should be voted for. To him, there is need for continuity and the only way is for the residents to deride the idea of ethnicity and embrace competence.

Sanwo-Olu was at the Computer Village, Ikeja to canvass for votes. He also visited Alaba International to seek the support of Igbo traders. He was at Alaba Rago to talk to the Arewa community, the core northerners, to vote for him.



## APC Victory In Lagos: What Changed Between Feb 25 And March 18

In his numerous moves, the governor took his campaign to market women, teachers and artisans and lured them to APC, using his past performance as the factor to get a second term.

In the last week to the election, Sanwo-Olu scheduled meetings with various stakeholders, including the civil servants where he revealed his plans to them. One of which was salary increment that he had since approved.

The ethnic campaigns, the Igbo agenda which was the strength of the oppositions in the

presidential election later became the undoing of the Labour Party as most voters refused to fall for the tricks after the presidential election.

The highlight of it was when some Igbo groups organised press conferences to distance themselves from those making ethnic campaigns in Lagos.

However on the eve of the election, some traditional rulers in Lagos announced the plans to stage "Oro" cultural rites, which became a thing of concern for some residents.

To the residents, the Oro rites was a plot by

the Yoruba traditional rulers to suppress voters on the election day.

While it was not observed to suppress the voters, according to the organisers, investigation revealed that the festival caused voters' apathy in some areas in the state.

For instance in those areas where there were no "Oro" rites like Alimosho communities, APC was able to poll over 84,000 to beat Labour that polled over 30,000 votes.

During the period between APC's presidential loss and the governorship election, there were

incidents of accident and fire disaster in Lagos, which in a way affected the ruling party but it also turned out to be a source of sympathy for the government and his party.

The Train and government's bus accident on Lagos-Abeokuta Expressway, which claimed six lives made Sanwo-Olu to stop his campaign for three days to mourn the deceased. The governor spent the three days to visit the family of the deceased and various hospitals to see the injured civil servants.

It was also a time that spare parts market at

Ajeromi Ifelodun area of Apapa Lagos was gutted with fire. The occupants of the market were mostly of Igbo extraction. Sanwo-Olu visited the place. He did not only empathise with the traders, he went ahead to pay them compensation of N100 million with the promise to rebuild the place as soon as he begins his second term.

During the presentation of the N100 million cheque, the traders promised their support to Sanwo-Olu and their allegiance to APC. Of course, there are voters who promised

to vote for APC but never did, the eventual victory of Sanwo-Olu signalled the death of politics of ethnicity and religiosity.

Another factor for Sanwo-Olu's victory was the presence of the president-elect, Bola Ahmed Tinubu in Lagos a few days to the election.

His presence converged the party's chieftains and allowed him to broker peace among the aggrieved ones. He also pleaded with the aggrieved party agents and voter's canvassers to sheath their swords and work for the victory of APC



Governor Sanwo-Olu during his visit to markets



Stories Kunle Awosiyani

# Fake LASTMA Officer Sentenced To Two-Year In Prison

The Lagos State Special Offences (Mobile) Court sitting at Bolade, Oshodi has sentenced an arrested fake Lastma Officer (Omotutu Bamidele) to a two-year jail term for impersonating and extorting money from motorists across Lagos. The convicted fake Lastma Officer was arraigned by the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) on a 2-Count charges of "Did impersonate as a public officer by representing as staff of Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (S.78 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State 2015)" and "Did obtain by fraudulent trick (Sec. 323 of the Criminal Law, Lagos State)" before the court. In a press statement released by the Director, Public Affairs and Enlightenment Department of LASTMA, Adebayo Taofiq quoted that Magistrate Kehinde Ogundare sentenced Omotutu Bamidele to a 2-year jail term without any option of fine after he pleaded 'Guilty' to the 2- count charged levied against him. Magistrate Ogundare emphasized that the convict should serve the jail term without any option fine due to the gravity of the offences committed.

The Court Prosecutor Barr. Olufemi Adekunle stated that both offences levied against the convict contravened Criminal Law of Lagos State (2015). In his reaction to the judgement, the General Manager of the Lagos

State Traffic Management Authority, LASTMA, Bolaji Oreagba said the judgement was a welcome development as it would serve as deterrent to others who are still extorting money from innocent members of public under false pretence.

According to Oreagba "Our Monitoring and Surveillance Unit which has now been fully restructured would continue to hunt for other bad elements disturbing the peace of the society"



The General Manager commercial bus of the Lagos State avoid attacking however urged operators to adhere Transport Sector Officers of the Agency. motorists particularly strictly to the dictates Reform Law 2018 and

Justice Oyindamola Ogala of an Ikeja High Court, today, granted bail to four staff members of Chrisland School, Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

They were granted bail after being arraigned over their alleged involvement in the death of a 12-year-old student of the school, Adeniran Omodesola Whitney, who died during the school's Inter-House Sports.

The defendants brought before the judge by the Lagos State Government, LASG, apart from the school, are Ademoye Adewale, Kuku Fatai, Belinda Amao, and Nwatu Victoria.

They were brought before the court on two counts that touch on involuntary manslaughter, reckless and negligent acts.

According to the charge prepared by the Director of Public Prosecutions, DPP, Dr Jide Martins, on February 9, 2023, at about 1 pm, at the Agege Sports Stadium, Agege, Lagos, in the Ikeja Judicial Division, the defendants allegedly killed Whitney by acting

## Whitney's Death: Chrisland Principal, Others Get N10m Bail Each

recklessly and negligently that endangered her life.

While the defendants were being arraigned, the Lagos State Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice, Moyosore Onigbanjo, SAN, told the court that the state had filed two count charges against the defendants, urging the court to take their plea.

This made Justice Ogala to direct that the charge as made by the LASG be read to the defendants, who pleaded not guilty to the same.

After the charge was read and their pleas were taken, the Attorney-General notified the trial judge that the state had lined up seventeen witnesses, and as

such will be praying for a date for the trial to commence.

Meanwhile, the applications for bail instituted by the defendants were not opposed by the prosecution.

In granting bail to the defendants, Justice Ogala held that the discretion to grant bail is that of the court.

She, therefore, granted bail to the 1st and 2nd defendants in the sum of N10m each with two responsible sureties in like sum.

The sureties, according to the judge, must produce before the court their financial status and two years' evidence of tax payment to the LASG.

Justice Ogala equally directed that the sureties must be resident within the jurisdiction of the court and that the defendants should submit their international passports to the Chief

Registrar, CR, of the court.

The judge also added that the financial status of the sureties must be verified by the court.

For the 3rd and 4th defendants, they were granted bail in the sum of N20m each, with two responsible sureties in the sums of N10m.

Justice Ogala who declared that the sureties must produce their financial status and two years' evidence of tax payment to the LASG, also ordered that the sureties must be resident within the jurisdiction of the court and that the defendants should submit their international passports to the Chief Registrar, CR, of the court.

The financial status of the sureties must be verified by the court, according to the judge.

The case has been adjourned until May 25, June 1, 8, and 15 for trial to begin.



Adeniran Omodesola Whitney



# At home with William Shakespeare

By Kehinde Bamigbetan

**O**n April 23, this year, it would be 407 years that the legendary playwright, actor and poet, William Shakespeare bit the dust. The author of classic drama such as *As You Like It*, *Anthony And Cleopatra*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo & Juliet*, has never been without company at his birthplace or grave.

I met William Shakespeare in 1980 in his play, *As You Like It*, a compulsory read for students sitting for the West African Examinations Council Ordinary Level examinations.

I was intimidated by his prodigious and prolific literature. At the last count, Shakespeare wrote 37 plays, 154 sonnets and five titled poems in an active literary life that began about 20 years. It seemed such an unbelievable feat for one person. This drew me closer to his works where I found most impressive his deft use of clowns such as *Touchstone* in *As You Like It* for social commentary. Many of his plays' titles have

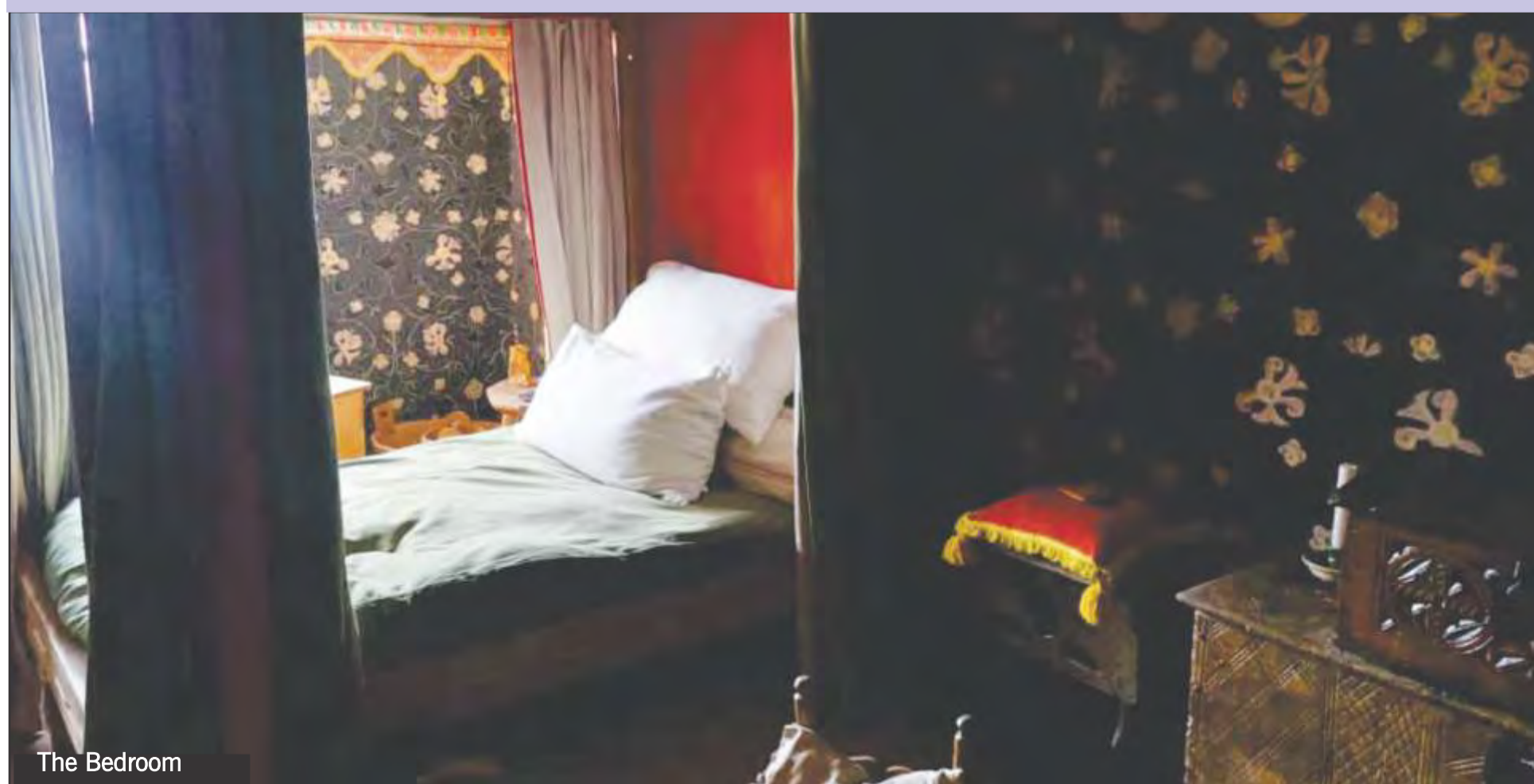
entered the English language and stayed put. *A Measure for Measure*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo & Juliet* evoke the images projected by the grand master.

On several trips to the United Kingdom in the last decade, a visit to the birthplace of the great icon became a dream that must come true.

So it was with excitement that I boarded the train from London to Stratford-Upon-Avon, arriving at half past noon.

Thanks to the William Shakespeare Birth Place Trust that restored and maintains the place, materials used by the playwright directly or their substitutes were on display to give tourists the opportunity to experience the times and life of the legend as much as possible.

The house that stands as the birthplace was owned by his father, John, an alderman of modest means. Although Williams acquired his own place in the town when he became successful, he had a row with the local authority over high taxes and decided to pull it down rather than pay.



The Bedroom



# At home with William Shakespeare

This further underscores the birthplace as the only surviving accomodation that he had. The birthplace set as it would have been at the turn of the 17th century is originally, a storey building with two rooms on each floor serving as

bed and living rooms. Following his inheritance, Shakespeare extended the rooms and converted them to bar downstairs and lodging upstairs. Since he spent much of his time producing plays at the Globe Theatre in

London, he permitted Joan, his sister to use a part of the building with her family. Till date, Joan's family, the Harts, are the surviving heirs to William's legacies. He had no great grand child. Even the Trust would

have had nothing to build on but for the intervention of another world-acclaimed writer, Charles Dickens, author of A Tale of Two Cities. After changing hands many times, the birthplace was to be demolished and sold when Dickens intervened and made a case to preserve it by raising 3,000 pounds. Today, visitors in tens and

hundreds flock to the birthplace to experience the habitat that produced the everlasting genius. Lying in the grave at the nearby church, unaware of tourists, witnessing his last abode, Shakespeare might want to utter a popular line from Aa You Like It: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players' (Act 2, Scene 7).



The Birth Place



His writing desk

